Correspondence school rape investigation halted

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Two young women who made rape allegations against a Correspondence School teacher have withdrawn their complaints and police say they won't be investigating any further.

The complainants had alleged the incidents happened in August and September 2003 and initially informed the Correspondence School who employed a private investigator to look into the matter.

The police became involved in February 2004 but now say the investigation is at an end.

Detective Senior Sergeant Simon Perry of Wellington today said one of the women had withdrawn her complaint and the second had also advised police she no longer believed a prosecution should proceed.

"In fairness to the young women, I'm not prepared to comment on inquiry details except to say that we are no longer investigating this matter."

The investigation had been complex, Mr Perry said in a statement. "The young women were emotionally vulnerable to exploitation by an older man.

"It has taken time to work through all the issues."

The teacher had already resigned and been deregistered by the Teachers Council.

Last year one of the two women said she had been frustrated by the Correspondence School's handling of her complaint and by delays in the police investigation.

A report by the private investigator employed by the school advised them in January 2004 to refer the two students' claims to police, with other allegations unearthed.

"(One of the students) states that (the teacher) boasted to her that he had sex with a 17-year-old student while he was a teacher at high school prior to working at the Correspondence School -- some 28 years ago."

The private investigator said the man's staff records indicated that alleged incident would have occurred while he was a teacher at Wellington High School.

- NZPA